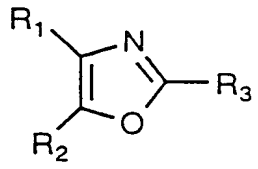
What is claimed is:

1. A compound of the formula:



(I)

wherein:

R_1 and R_2 are independently selected from an optionally substituted aryl or heteroaryl group, provided that at least one of R_1 and R_2 is an optionally substituted heteroaryl, and further provided that both R_1 and R_2 are not the same heteroaryl group;

wherein when one of R_1 and R_2 is an optionally substituted aryl ring, the ring is substituted by one or two substituents, each of which is independently selected, and which, for a 4-phenyl, 4-naphth-1-yl or 5-naphth-2-yl substituent, is halo, cyano, $-C(Z)NR_7R_{17}$, $-C(Z)OR_{23}$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m COR_{36}$, $-SR_5$, $-SOR_5$, $-OR_{36}$, halo-substituted-C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{1-4} alkyl, $-ZC(Z)R_{36}$, $-NR_{10}C(Z)R_{23}$, or $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_mNR_{10}R_{20}$;

and which, for other positions of substitution, is halo, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"-cyano, $-C(Z)NR_{16}R_{26}$, $-C(Z)OR_8$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$" COR_8, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$S(O)_mR_8$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"OR_8, halo-substituted-C_{1-4} alkyl, $-C_{1-4}$ alkyl, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$NR_{10}C(Z)R_8$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$NR_{10}S(O)_{m'}R_{11}$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$NR_{10}S(O)_{m'}NR_7R_{17}$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$ZC(Z)R_8$ or $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_m$"$NR_{16}R_{26}$;

and when one of R_1 and R_2 is an optionally substituted heteroaryl group, the substituent groups include one or two substituents each of which is independently selected from C_{1-4} alkyl, halo, C_{1-4} alkoxy, C_{1-4} alkylthio, $NR_{10}R_{20}$, or an N-heterocyclyl ring which ring has from 5 to 7 members and optionally contains an additional heteroatom selected from oxygen, sulfur or NR_{22};

R_3 is $-X_aP(Z)(X_bR_{13})_2$, X_c or $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n R_4$;

R_4 is $Q-(Y_1)_t$;

Q is an aryl or heteroaryl group;

X_c is hydrogen, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n (Y_2)_p$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n -C=C- (CR_{10}R_{20})_n(Y_2)_p$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n -C\equiv C- (CR_{10}R_{20})_{n'} (Y_2)_p$, or halosubstituted C_{1-10} alkyl;

t is an integer having a value of 1 to 3;

p is 0 or an integer having a value of 1, provided that when p is 0 then Y_2 is hydrogen;

X_a is -NR_8-, -O-, -S- or a C_{1-10} alkylene chain optionally substituted by C_{1-4} alkyl and optionally interrupted by -NR_8-, -O- or -S-;

X_b is independently selected from -$(CR_{10}R_{20})_n$, -NR_8-, -O- or -S-;

Z is oxygen or sulfur;

n is 0 or an integer having a value of 1 to 10;

n' is an integer having a value of 1 to 10;

m is 0, or the integer 1 or 2;

m' is 1 or 2;

m" is 0 or an integer having a value of 1 to 5;

Y_1 is independently selected from hydrogen, C_{1-5} alkyl, halo-substituted C_{1-5} alkyl, halogen, -X_a-P(Z)-$(X_bR_{13})_2$ or -$(CR_{10}R_{20})_nY_2$;

Y_2 is halogen, -OR_8, -NO_2, -$S(O)_{m'}R_{11}$, -SR_8, -$S(O)_{m'}NR_8R_9$, -NR_8R_9, -$O(CR_{10}R_{20})_{n'}NR_8R_9$, -$C(O)R_8$, -$CO_2R_8$, -$CO_2(CR_{10}R_{20})_{n'}CONR_8R_9$, -$ZC(O)R_8$, -CN, -$C(Z)NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}C(Z)R_8$, -$C(Z)NR_8OR_9$, -$NR_{10}C(Z)NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}S(O)_{m'}R_{11}$, -$N(OR_{21})C(Z)NR_8R_9$, -$N(OR_{21})C(Z)R_8$, -$C(=NOR_{21})R_8$, -$NR_{10}C(=NR_{15})SR_{11}$, -$NR_{10}C(=NR_{15})NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}C(=CR_{14}R_{24})SR_{11}$, -$NR_{10}C(=CR_{14}R_{24})NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}C(O)C(O)NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}C(O)C(O)OR_{10}$, -$C(=NR_{13})NR_8R_9$, -$C(=NOR_{13})NR_8R_9$, -$C(=NR_{13})ZR_{11}$, -$OC(Z)NR_8R_9$, -$NR_{10}S(O)_2CF_3$, -$NR_{10}C(Z)OR_{10}$, 5-($R_{18}$)-1,2,4-oxadizaol-3-yl or 4-(R_{12})-5-($R_{18}R_{19}$)-4,5-dihydro-1,2,4-oxadiazol-3-yl;

R_5 is hydrogen, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{2-4} alkenyl, C_{2-4} alkynyl or NR_7R_{17}, excluding the moieties -SR_5 being -SNR_7R_{17} and -SOR_5 being -SOH;

R_6 is C_{1-4} alkyl, halo-substituted-C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{2-4} alkenyl, C_{2-4} alkynyl or C_{3-5} cycloalkyl;

R_7 and R_{17} is each independently selected from hydrogen or C_{1-4} alkyl or R_7 and R_{17} together with the nitrogen to which they are attached form a heterocyclic ring of 5 to 7 members which ring optionally contains an additional heteroatom selected from oxygen, sulfur or NR_{22};

R_8 is hydrogen, heterocyclyl, heterocyclylalkyl or R_{11};

R_9 is hydrogen, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{5-7} cycloalkenyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl or heteroarylalkyl or R_8 and R_9 may together with the nitrogen to which they are attached form a heterocyclic ring of 5 to 7 members which ring optionally contains an additional heteroatom selected from oxygen, sulfur or NR_{12};

R_{10} and R_{20} is each independently selected from hydrogen or C_{1-4} alkyl;

R_{11} is C_{1-10} alkyl, halo-substituted C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{2-10} alkenyl, C_{2-10} alkynyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, C_{5-7} cycloalkenyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl or heteroarylalkyl;

R_{12} is hydrogen, -C(Z)R_{13} or optionally substituted C_{1-4} alkyl, optionally substituted aryl or optionally substituted aryl-C_{1-4} alkyl;

R_{13} is hydrogen, C_{1-10} alkyl, cycloalkyl, heterocyclyl, aryl, arylalkyl, heteroaryl or heteroarylalkyl;

R_{14} and R_{24} is each independently selected from hydrogen, alkyl, nitro or cyano;

R_{15} is hydrogen, cyano, C_{1-4} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl or aryl;

R_{16} and R_{26} is each independently selected from hydrogen or optionally substituted C_{1-4} alkyl, optionally substituted aryl or optionally substituted aryl-C_{1-4} alkyl, or together with the nitrogen which they are attached form a heterocyclic ring of 5 to 7 members which ring optionally contains an additional heteroatom selected from oxygen, sulfur or NR_{12} ;

R_{18} and R_{19} is each independently selected from hydrogen, C_{1-4} alkyl, substituted alkyl, optionally substituted aryl, optionally substituted arylalkyl or together R_{18} and R_{19} denote a oxygen or sulfur;

R_{21} is hydrogen, a pharmaceutically acceptable cation, C_{1-10} alkyl, C_{3-7} cycloalkyl, aryl, aryl C_{1-4} alkyl, heteroaryl, heteroarylalkyl, heterocyclyl, aroyl, or C_{1-10} alkanoyl;

R_{22} is R_{10} or C(Z)-C_{1-4} alkyl;

R_{23} is C_{1-4} alkyl, halo-substituted-C_{1-4} alkyl, or C_{3-5} cycloalkyl;

R_{36} is hydrogen or R_{23};

or a pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

2. The compound according to Claim 1 wherein R_1 or R_2 is an optionally substituted 4-pyridyl or 4-pyrimidinyl.

3. The compound according to Claim 2 wherein the optional substituent is C_{1-4} alkyl or $NR_{10}R_{20}$.

4. The compound according to any of Claims 1 to 3wherein R_1 or R_2 is an optionally substituted phenyl.

5. The compound according to Claim 4 wherein the one or more optional substituents are independently selected from halogen or methoxy.

6. The compound according to any of Claims 1 to 5 wherein R_3 is X_C or -$(CR_{10}R_{20})_nR_4$.

7. The compound according to Claim 6 wherein R_3 is hydrogen, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n(Y_2)_p$, $-(CR_{10}R_{20})_n CH_3$; and Y_2 is $-NR_8R_9$ or $-NR_{10}C(Z)R_8$; and R_4 is an optionally substituted phenyl.

8. The compound according to Claim 5 or 6 wherein R_3 is hydrogen, methyl, amino, $-NR_{10}C(O)R_8$, phenyl, or phenyl substituted by $-SR_8$ or $-S(O)_{m'}R_{11}$.

9. The compound according to Claim 1 which is:
5-(3-Methoxyphenyl)-2-methyl-4-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
5-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Methyl-4-(Phenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-phenyl-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Amino-4-(4-fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole.
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(2-methylpyrid-4-yl)oxazole;
4-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(3-Chlorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-(4-methylthiophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-[4-(methylsulfinyl)phenyl]-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Acetamido-4-(4-fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(2-amino-pyrimidin-4-yl)oxazole; or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

10. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent and a compound according to any of Claims 1 to 9.

11. A method of treating a cytokine mediated disease in an animal in need thereof which method comprises administering to said animal an effective cytokine mediating amount of a compound according to any of Claims 1 to 9.

12. The method according to Claim 11 wherein the cytokine mediated disease is asthma, adult respiratory distress syndrome, stroke, bone reasorption diseases, arthritic joint conditions, and other inflammatory diseases.

13. The method according to Claim 11 or 12 wherein the compound is
5-(3-Methoxyphenyl)-2-methyl-4-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;

5-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-4-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Methyl-4-(Phenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-methyl-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-phenyl-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Amino-4-(4-fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(2-methylpyrid-4-yl)oxazole;
4-(3,4-Dichlorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(3-Chlorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-(4-methylthiophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-2-[4-(methylsulfinyl)phenyl]-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
2-Acetamido-4-(4-fluorophenyl)-5-(4-pyridyl)oxazole;
4-(4-Fluorophenyl)-5-(2-amino-pyrimidin-4-yl)oxazole; or pharmaceutically acceptable salts thereof.

14. The method according to any of Claims 11 to 13 wherein the mediation of the disease state is by Interleukin-1 (IL-1).

15. The method according to any of Claims 11 to 13 wherein the mediation of the disease state is by Tumor Necrosis Factor (TNF).

16. A method of treating inflammation in a mammal in need thereof which comprises administering to said mammal an effective amount of a compound according to any of Claims 1 to 9.